

Submission by

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To the

Advisory Panel

On the

**Canadian Air Transport Security Authority
Act Review**

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Written submission to:
THE ADVISORY PANEL

CATSA ACT REVIEW

I am Mr. Jim Guillaume. I am making this submission on my own behalf as a concerned citizen.

I have been a professional pilot for thirty years, an air transport captain for over five years and have served as a general duty peace officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police stationed in the province of Saskatchewan from 1975 to 1979.

I wish to thank this distinguished panel for the opportunity to present my views on the air transport security act, how it has impacted the aviation community, and how it should be amended if necessary.

To start I wish to make some observations about the CATSA Act. As I understand it, the minister is empowered to enact regulations within the scope of the act. The Aeronautics Act has the Canadian Air Regulations and Standards. These regulations are made readily available to the affected parties via print, or and on-line and those parties are responsible for them. In my experience, the CATSA regulations are not widely circulated. I've been told that I can view them if I wish to come to the Transport Canada Security office at my home base, but the inspector wanted to know why I had an interest in them. Personally I find it offensive by being questioned by a public servant as to why I want to know the regulations that I am governed by. This leads me to my second point of concern. There is no method to appeal a judgment or fine imposed by said inspector under the CATSA regulations to the best of my limited knowledge. This is patently in contravention of the intent of Canadian law.

The outrageous events of the Air India bombing, and September 11, 2001 have shaped global aviation security issues irreparably and I would be the first person to recognize that an effective airport security was and continues to be most necessary.

This being said, I believe that the previous government acted in a reactive manner to world events in order to appear to be doing something on this crucial issue of national security when it enacted the CATSA Act. The major pilot associations have been involved worldwide for years to improve air safety and security, but to the best of my knowledge, there was little if any consultation with stakeholders that this specific act influenced when it was rushed through parliament.

As it has been over four years since those events, I am of the opinion that a systemic shift of focus is necessary to become proactive in security matters as it applies to current legislation. CATSA is very proud of the fact they've seized over 700,000 items last year that were deemed to be a danger to the public safety. As a peace officer, I witnessed by demonstration during training that a simple ballpoint pen when held up to a person's eye is a dangerous weapon. Although CATSA seizures are impressive, I submit you cannot determine all the potential weapons that a person may have and therefore this focus is flawed. What is needed I feel is to focus on the individual and their intent. Unfortunately, political correctness views all persons presenting themselves for screening are deemed to be equal and therefore a risk. And because they are a risk, anything in their possession must be compared to a government-mandated list of prohibitions. The continued use of this flawed model is not realistic. This is both time consuming, demeaning and wasteful of limited resources. There is no logical correlation that I can make with the possession of lighters, knitting needles or small nail files and attempted interference with the lawful operation of an aircraft. We need to be focusing on potential perpetrators not the grandmother from Grand Prairie that is going to visit her children in Regina.

CATSA is mandated by the act to provide consistent delivery of security screening across the country. This mandate has not been met, as I will attempt to demonstrate. The firms that CATSA contracts with to supply the screeners are paying the minimum wage, offer poor working conditions and offers little or no job security. Quite often, these screeners have to endure public protest. CATSA's answer to internal complaints from screening staff about disgruntled passengers is to post another sign to the public threatening to deny boarding to those individuals that challenge any employee and the way they are functioning. Moral is low and turnover is high. From previous experience, I would tend to conclude that this area itself could potentially be a breeding ground of dissatisfaction that could lend itself to a potential security threat to air transportation.

This seems to be inconsistent administration of the act.

As a crewmember in air transport, I was required to submit a four-page application for my RAIC identification card to my local airport authority, then to be fingerprinted and photographed. My application was then submitted to the appropriate police authority for authorization. After a considerable time, the local airport authority issues said secure RAIC pass. When I approach airport security screening at any place other than my home

base, my RAIC pass means nothing. I would like to offer some examples of my own recent experience to demonstrate

- At some airports flight crew are allowed to bypass general passenger screening, but in most cases at least one member of my crew still has to go through “random secondary searches.” On US bound flights, a third screening is occasionally required.
- At other airports, Toronto Pearson in particular, all flight crew must go through regular screening while local sales vending staff are allowed to use a bypass.
- When I’m operating from a bypass airport to my home base, and then wish to fly standby, I am required to leave secure area, and then proceed back through passenger screening because I was not screened. I submit, “Am I any less of a security threat after I’ve gone through general screening than I was when I was flying my aircraft?”
- After purchasing a coffee from the Ottawa airport Tim Horton’s in uniform and displaying my RAIC pass, the security staff demand that I drink some of my unidentified fluid because in his opinion it presents a security risk.
- The embarrassing and demeaning requirement to partially disrobing to remove suspect footwear and uniform items (all I can think is “thank heavens the infamous shoe bomber wasn’t wearing exploding briefs”) the requirement to have my lap top or camera examined for explosive material and to the search and seizure of personal eating utensils and grooming gear that can be purchased in the secure area.

This is ludicrous! To improve the RAIC system, I submit that Canada should get away from the current local airport pass system and institute a national pass system that should be instituted and administered by a central agency for flight crews as it is with Transport Canada Air Carrier Inspectors. This should be biometric like the system started in Calgary to ensure the integrity of the system.

As pilots and flight attendants, we are licensed and monitored by Transport Canada, well trained, motivated and trustworthy enough to operate our aircraft and even trained in the physical control of a disruptive passenger. With recent history though, terrorist attacks have centered on taking control of our aircraft or to install incendiary devices onboard. Because we will be directly affected by this action we have a vested interest to ensure that this doesn’t happen. The Canadian public trusts us and as do the RCMP APO members who fly with us continually. Isn’t it about time that the administrators and contractors of the CATSA Act do the same? I believe that air crew are seen as an easy targets and worthy of more scrutiny than the general public much like patrol officers view a group of teenage boys in a sports car on Saturday night. Flight crewmembers are required to be submissive and compliant, much like the population of Canada’s correction facilities. The security processing for flight crews has been seen to degenerate and is viewed with contempt. The Canadian security organizations have alienated what could have been a valuable resource that should be used to counter terrorism. To this end, they are wasting valuable and scarce resources.

Is the structure of Air Transport security appropriate? I personally have serious doubts to that question. Even in the late 1970's, I witnessed the reluctance of separate branches within the RCMP to share intelligence with each other on a local and provincial level. The public observed the continuation of this same secretive culture when it was divulged that crucial information was not shared between the RCMP and CSIS during the Air India investigation. This will undoubtedly be reviewed in the upcoming judicial review of that terrible event and hopefully these organizations will learn something even if it is for internal use only. For this reason, I shall not comment further. To ensure seamless aviation security, I believe that a centralized organization should be used. It is intuitively apparent that it is counter-productive to have four security agencies (Transport Canada, RCMP, CSIS, CATSA) competing for limited resources and working to the same end. They should be working in harmony, reducing costs and increasing efficiency. Finally the authority should be directly responsible to parliament. The ability to hide behind an arm's length relationship is not conducive to building trust within the aviation community. Further, other than increasing CATSA authority and responsibility to screen air freight, I believe that they would better serve the public good, if they paid closer attention to their current mandate instead of trying to expand their horizons to other fields.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views.

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